

Highlights - Amorous Relationship Policy *update*

- **Why was this policy updated and does it apply to me?**

UNH wanted to clarify its existing Consensual Amorous Relationship policy and the USNH Board of Trustees wanted a system-wide USNH Amorous Relationship policy. Utilizing the UNH Consensual Relationship Policy as a foundation, the USNH institutions collaborated to clarify and then extend the policy beyond UNH to GSC, KSC, and PSU. This policy is an important part of the university's ongoing effort to provide an equitable workplace, protecting employees in amorous relationships from a violation of the USNH conflict of interest policy and potential legal claims, and helping ensure no perception of favoritism or undue influence by those who are in such relationships. The policy applies to all faculty, staff, volunteers, student employees – including graduate and teaching assistants - and the policy informs actions related to vendors/contractors providing services to our community.

- **What's the difference between this updated policy and the UNH Consensual Amorous Relationship policy?**

Key clarifications in this policy include:

- Faculty and staff are prohibited from pursuing or engaging in an amorous relationship with *undergraduate students*
- *Graduate and teaching assistants* are prohibited from dating any undergraduate student who they supervise, or may have impact to the student's academic/employment dynamic, or are in the same academic program by the department
- The policy applies to *undergraduate students* who supervise or may have impact to the student's academic dynamic
- Parties involved in any amorous relationship with an uneven power dynamic are *required* to disclose the relationship to authorities
- Parties must disclose a *past* amorous relationship if there is currently an uneven power dynamic
- *Supervisors who suspect* an amorous relationship with an uneven power dynamic that is denied or not disclosed must report to AAEO for investigation
- When an uneven power dynamic cannot be eliminated, one or both parties may be moved to a different role, or if no other role is available or appropriate, leave the institution

- **What is the policy definition of an amorous relationship?**

Any interpersonal relationship that is intimate, sexual, and/or any other type of amorous encounter or relationship, whether casual or serious, short or long-term.

- **What if I am unclear if I should disclose or not?**

You can confidentially reach out to your HR Partner or the Affirmative Action and Equity Office who will help you determine if there is a need to report the current or past relationship.

- **What is an uneven power dynamic?**

A circumstance where:

- one party has professional responsibility to evaluate the other party's academic and/or work performance, and/or a "check and balance" role relative to the other (e.g., sign off on a time sheet or expense report),
- one party could be called upon to participate in decisions affecting the other party's employment or academic prospects (e.g. promotion, grading, work evaluation, etc.),

- where both parties are members of a team/work group/academic group and the relationship can reasonably be perceived as having influence on others of their team/group.
- **Does this apply just to the campus environment?**
The policy applies to all locations and venues where work or academics are performed, including but not limited to, our Concord and Manchester locations, off site internships, workshops, conferences, athletic/recreational events and trips abroad.
- **To whom do I disclose the existence of an amorous relationship?**
To your supervisor, who will then contact Human Resources or the Affirmative Action and Equity Office.
- **What is the process after I disclose?**
You will work with your supervisor and/or your HR partner to create a written plan to formalize steps taken to mitigate an uneven power dynamic or potential impact to the work or academic dynamic. The plan will include reassignment of supervisory and/or check and balance oversight duties and recusal of the parties from all institutional decisions related to the other. In some circumstances, it may be necessary to modify employment roles.
- **The following are examples which would be considered violations of this Policy:**
 - Lecturer engages in a relationship with an undergraduate student who is pursuing a degree in another College.
 - Administrator pursues a relationship with a non-traditional age undergraduate student working at an off-campus location affiliated with UNH.
 - Faculty of similar status go out on a couple of dates. One faculty is promoted to Chair. Parties fail to disclose the amorous relationship.
 - A faculty and a staff member were married and then became divorced. They remained employed at UNH. Several years later, the faculty becomes a PI (Principal Investigator) on a research grant and the ex-spouse assists with the administrative duties in managing the grant. They failed to disclose their prior marriage.
 - The spouse of a faculty member is accepted into the graduated program of the department. They failed to disclose their marriage. When other graduate students learn of the marriage they raise the issue and believe that the spouse is receiving special treatment.
 - A member of the community volunteers to coach a Campus Recreation Sport Club Team and engages in a relationship with a member of that team.
 - An undergraduate work-study student with supervisory responsibility begins dating an undergraduate student who they supervise.
 - Two Resident Assistants (RA) live in the same residential hall and are engaged in an amorous romantic relationship. The following year, one elects to not be an RA and becomes a resident of that residential hall. They failed to disclose their relationship.